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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/577,979	05/01/2006	Shinichi Yamamoto	50478-2000	5180
53044 7590 07/21/2008 SNELL & WILMER L.L.P. (Matsushita) 600 ANTON BOULEVARD SUITE 1400 COSTA MESA, CA 92626				
			EXAMINER SNYDER, ZACHARY J	
			ART UNIT 2889	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/577,979

Applicant(s)

YAMAMOTO ET AL.

Examiner

Zachary Snyder

Art Unit

2889

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 May 2006.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
7) ☒ Claim(s) 21 and 22 is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 01 May 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/01/06
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3 and 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2002-117771 to Seiki et al.

In regard to claim 1, Seiki discloses, in figure 1, a plasma display panel (panel 1, paragraph 5) comprising,

a front substrate (glass front board 3, paragraph 5) and a back substrate (back substrate 4, paragraph 4) that face each other with a space (discharge space 2, paragraph 5) therebetween (shown in figure 1), the front panel having a plurality of electrodes (scan electrode 7 and sustenance electrode 8, paragraph 5) disposed on a main surface thereof (shown in figure 5), and

a dielectric film (dielectric layer 5, paragraph 3) and a protective film (DLC film 13, paragraph 26 or MgO film 14, paragraph 36) formed sequentially to cover the electrodes (shown in figures 1 and 3), and

luminescent display being performed by applying a voltage to the electrodes to cause a discharge in the space (discharge space 2) between the substrates (glass front board 3 and back substrate 4), characterized in that:

a plurality of needle crystals (diamond particle 12, paragraph 21) composed of a conductive substance (carbon) are disposed to penetrate at least one of the dielectric film (dielectric layer 5) and the protective film (DLC film 13) in a thickness direction (shown in figures 1 and 3 that diamond particle 12 penetrates the DLC film 13 and MgO film 14).

In regard to claim 2, Seiki discloses all the limitations of claim 1. Seiki also discloses that the needle crystals (diamond particle 12) are disposed substantially perpendicular to the main surface of the front substrate (glass front board 3) to penetrate the protective film in a thickness direction (shown in figure 3 to be penetrating MgO film 14), and a material of the protective film is layered to completely fill gaps between the needle crystals (shown in figure 3).

In regard to claim 3, Seiki discloses all the limitations of claim 2. Seiki also discloses that the protective film material (MgO film 14) and the needle crystals (diamond particle 12) form a phase-separated structure (shown in figure 3 that the MgO film 14 fills in the gaps between diamond particle 12 forming a phase separation between individual particles).

In regard to claim 9, Seiki discloses all the limitations of claim 2 and that the tips of the needle crystals (diamond particle 12) are exposed above the surface (shown in figure 3) of the protective film (DLC film 13).

In regard to claim 10, Seiki discloses all the limitations of claim 2 and that the tips of the needle crystals (diamond particle 12) are buried (shown in figure 1) in the protective film (DLC film 13).

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1, 11-13, 15, 18, 20, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by WO 2004/086449 to Kim et al.

In regard to claim 1, Kim discloses, in figure 2, a plasma display panel (page 8, line 22)) comprising,

a front substrate (front panel 100, page 8, line 22) and a back substrate (inherently present) that face each other with a space (inherently present) therebetween, the front panel having a plurality of electrodes (electrodes 300 and 302, page 9, line 5) disposed on a main surface thereof, and

a dielectric film (dielectric layers 400 and 410, page 8, lines 25 and 27) and a protective film (protective film 500, page 8, line 28) formed sequentially to cover the electrodes, and

luminescent display being performed by applying a voltage to the electrodes to cause a discharge in the space between the substrates (inherent function of the PDP), characterized in that:

a plurality of needle crystals (nano tips 610, page 8, line 7) composed of a conductive substance (carbon, page 5, lines 18-21) are disposed to penetrate at least one of the dielectric film (dielectric layer 410) and the protective film (protective film 500) in a thickness direction.

In regard to claim 11, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 1 and that the needle crystals (nano tips 610) are disposed substantially perpendicular (shown in figure 2) to the main surface of the front substrate to penetrate the dielectric film (dielectric layer 410) in a thickness direction, and a material of the dielectric film (dielectric layer 410) and a material of the protective film (protective film 500) are layered to completely fill gaps between the needle crystals (shown in figure 2).

In regard to claim 12, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 11 and that the dielectric film material (dielectric layer 410) and the needle crystals (nano tips 610) form a phase-separated structure (shown in figure 2 that the dielectric layer 410 fills in the gaps between nano tips 610 forming a phase separation between individual nano tips).

In regard to claim 13, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 11 and that the needle crystals (nano tips 610) are graphite crystals (nano tips formed of a carbon compound such as carbon nano tubes, page 5, lines 18-19).

In regard to claim 15, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 13 and that the graphite crystals (nano tips 610) are one member selected from the group consisting of carbon nanotubes, graphite nanofibers, and diamond-like carbon (nano tips formed of a carbon compound such as carbon nano tubes, page 5, lines 18-19).

In regard to claim 18, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 11 and that the tips of the needle crystals (nano tips 610) are exposed above the surface (shown in figure 2) of the protective film (protective film 500).

In regard to claim 20, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 11 and that the electrodes include a display electrode pair (electrode 300 and 302), and the needle crystals (nano tips 610) are disposed on one or both of the display electrodes in the pair (shown in figure 2 to be disposed on both).

In regard to claim 23, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 1 and that the protective film (protective film 500) is composed of one or a compound of metal oxides selected from the group consisting of magnesium oxide, calcium oxide, strontium oxide, and barium oxide (protective film 500 is composed of MgO, page 8, line 28).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2002-117771 to Seiki et al. as applied to claims 1-3 and 9-10 above, and further in view of WO 2004/086449 to Kim et al.

In regard to claims 4 and 6, Seiki discloses all the limitations of claim 2 but does not disclose that the needle crystals are graphite crystals are made of one member selected from the group consisting of carbon nanotubes, graphite nanofibers, and diamond-like carbon.

Kim discloses a PDP device employing needle crystals (nano tips 610, page 8, line 7) that graphite crystals are made of one member selected from the group consisting of carbon nanotubes, graphite nanofibers, and diamond-like carbon (nano tips formed of a carbon compound such as carbon nano tubes, page 5, lines 18-19).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to make the needle crystals of Seiki's PDP from graphite crystals that are made of one member selected from the group consisting of carbon nanotubes, graphite nanofibers, and diamond-like carbon as disclosed by Kim because Kim discloses in the technical field paragraph that forming the specific nano tips on the dielectric layer will improve light emitting efficiency

and drop the driving voltage. Kim discloses that these specific nano tips, implying their location in the display as well as the material they comprise, will work towards improving the light emitting efficiency and drop the driving voltage.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2002-117771 to Seiki et al. in view of WO 2004/086449 to Kim et al. as applied to claim 4 above, and further in view of US Patent 5,872,422 to Xu et al.

In regard to claim 5, Seiki in view of Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 4 but does not teach that a metal layer composed of one or a plurality of metals selected from the group consisting of iron, cobalt, and nickel is interposed between the dielectric film and the needle crystals.

Xu discloses a carbon fiber emission device wherein a metal layer composed from the group consisting of iron, cobalt, and nickel (metal catalyst film 134, COL. 17, LINE 18-19, is containing iron, cobalt, nickel, etc. is used as the transition metal for the catalyst, COL. 19, LINES 36-39) is interposed between the needle crystals (carbon emitters 142, COL. 17, LINES 23-24) and the dielectric film (resistor layer 132 that limits the emission current).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include a metal layer composed of iron, cobalt, or nickel as taught by Xu in between the needle crystals (nanotip made of carbon nanotube) and the dielectric layer taught by Seiki in view of Kim since transition metals, such as iron, cobalt, and nickel, are suitable catalyst material for a catalyst layer for growing carbon nanotubes, as taught by Xu et al..

Comment [K1]: nanotip made of carbon nanotube) and the dielectric layer since transition metals as the catalyst layer since transition metal such as iron, cobalt and nickel are suitable catalyst material layer for growing carbon nanotubes, as taught by Xu et al..

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2002-117771 to Seiki et al. as applied to claims 1-3 and 9-10 above, and further in view of U.S. PG Publication 2002/0060514 A1 to Nakamoto and EP 0325797 A1 to Yoshinaka et al.

In regard to claims 7 and 8, Seiki discloses a PDP employing needle crystals but does not disclose that the needle crystals are tetrapod-shaped particles composed of zinc oxide.

Nakamoto discloses an electron emission device employing needle crystals (micro bodies 44, paragraph 52) that are tetrapod-shaped particles and composed of zinc oxide (micro –bodies 44 are tetrapod-shaped and made of ZnO, paragraph 52).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the needle crystals disclosed by Seiki be composed of zinc oxide and have a tetrapod shape as taught by Nakamoto because Yoshimaka discloses that the zinc oxide whiskers with a tetrapod shape exhibit significantly improved electrical properties without showing any anisotropy with respect to the characteristic properties (page 3, lines 3-5).

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 2004/086449 to Kim et al. as applied to claims 1, 11-13, 15, 18, 20, and 23 above, and further in view of US Patent 5,872,422 to Xu et al.

In regard to claim 14, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 13 but does not teach that a metal layer composed of one or a plurality of metals selected from the group consisting of iron, cobalt, and nickel is interposed between the dielectric film and the needle crystals.

Xu discloses a carbon fiber emission device wherein a metal layer composed from the group consisting of iron, cobalt, and nickel (metal catalyst film 134, COL. 17, LINE 18-19, is containing iron, cobalt, nickel, etc. is used as the transition metal for the catalyst, COL. 19, LINES 36-39) is interposed between the needle crystals (carbon emitters 142, COL. 17, LINES 23-24) and the dielectric film (resistor layer 132 that limits the emission current).

Comment [K2]: Insert same type of comment as in K2

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include a metal layer composed of iron, cobalt, or nickel as taught by Xu in between the needle crystals (nanotip made of carbon nanotube) and the dielectric layer taught by Seiki in view of Kim since transition metals, such as iron, cobalt, and nickel, are suitable catalyst material for a catalyst layer for growing carbon nanotubes, as taught by Xu et al.

Comment [K3]: nanotip made of carbon nanotubes) and the dielectric layer since transition metals as the catalyst layer since transition metal such as iron, cobalt and nickel are suitable catalyst material layer for growing carbon nanotubes, as taught by Xu et al.

Claims 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 2004/086449 to Kim et al. as applied to claims 1, 11-13, 15, 18, 20, and 23 above, and further in view of U.S. PG Publication 2002/0060514 A1 to Nakamoto and EP 0325797 A1 to Yoshinaka et al.

In regard to claims 16 and 17, Kim discloses a PDP employing needle crystals but does not disclose that the needle crystals are tetrapod-shaped particles composed of zinc oxide.

Nakamoto discloses an electron emission device employing needle crystals (micro bodies 44, paragraph 52) that are tetrapod-shaped particles and composed of zinc oxide (micro -bodies 44 are tetrapod-shaped and made of ZnO, paragraph 52).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the needle crystals disclosed by Kim be composed of zinc oxide and have a tetrapod shape as taught by Nakamoto because Yoshinaka discloses that the zinc oxide whiskers with a tetrapod shape exhibit significantly improved electrical properties without showing any anisotropy with respect to the characteristic properties (page 3, lines 3-5).

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 2004/086449 to Kim et al. as applied to claims 1, 11-13, 15, 18, 20, and 23 above, and further in view of JP 2002-117771 to Seiki et al.

In regard to claim 19, Kim discloses all the limitations of claim 11 but does not disclose that the tips of the needle crystals are buried in the protective film.

Seiki discloses a PDP device employing needle crystals (diamond particle 12) that are buried (shown in figure 1) in the protective film (DLC film 13).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to bury the needle crystals of Kim's invention in the protective layer as taught by Seiki because Seiki discloses that covering the diamond particle 12 with the DLC film 13 will reduce sustaining voltage (paragraph 26).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 21 and 22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 21 is allowable because the examiner is unable to find prior art in which needle crystals are formed on an electron emitting electrode formed between the display electrode pair and penetrates the dielectric layer in a thickness direction and the material of the dielectric layer and protection layer are layered to completely fill gaps between the needle crystals.

Art such as US Patent 5,973,444 to Xu et al. show need crystals formed between an electrode pair but there is no dielectric layer being penetrated by the needle crystals and no protection layer completely filling in the gaps between the needle crystals.

Claim 22 is allowable because it depends from claim 21.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Zachary Snyder whose telephone number is (571)270-5291. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, 7:30AM to 6PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Toan Ton can be reached on (571)272-2303. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2889

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Zachary Snyder/
Examiner, Art Unit 2889

/Karabi Guharay/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2889